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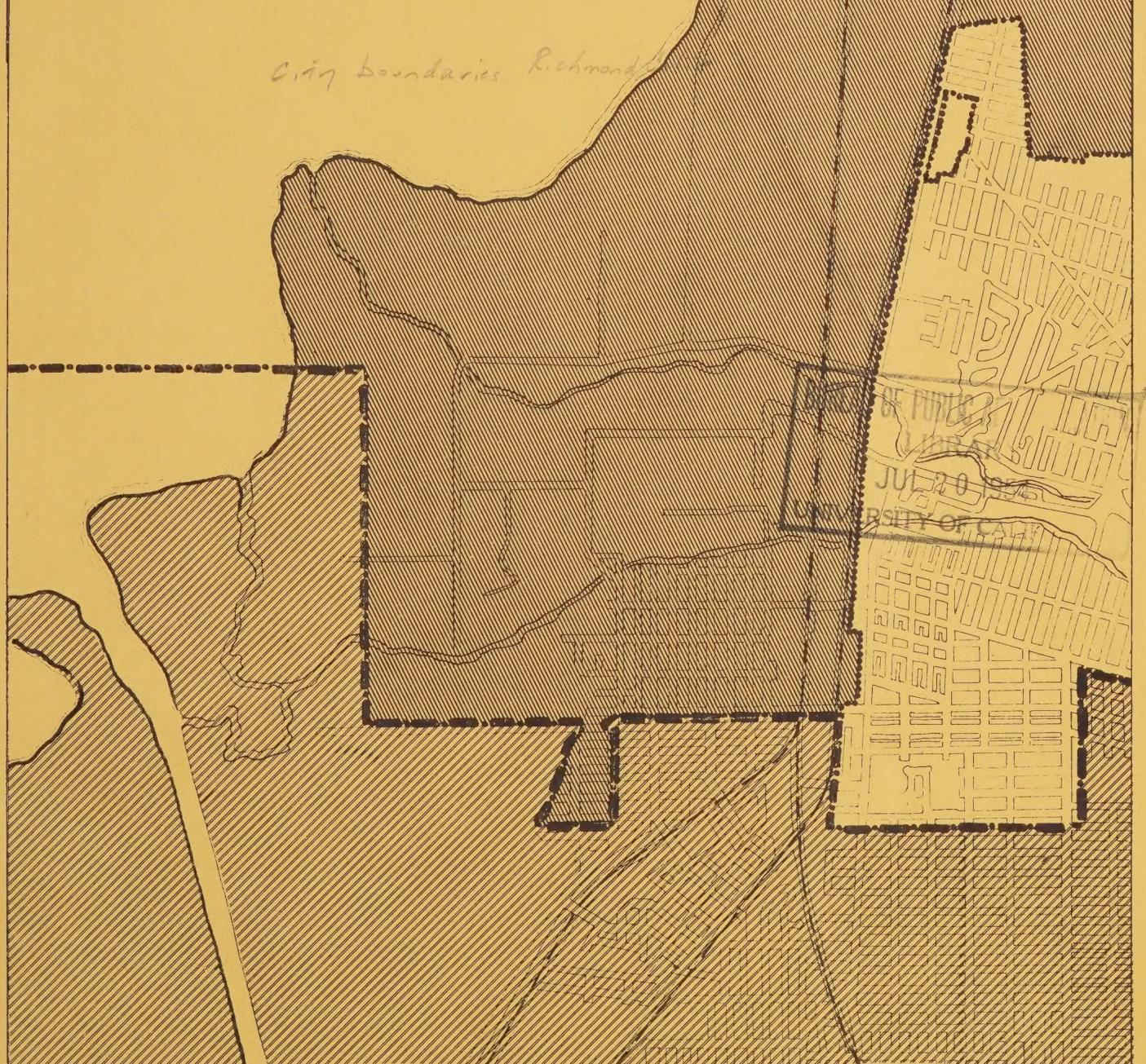
CITY PLANNING Administration Richmond, California

no. 20

NORTH RICHMOND

A REPORT ON THE PROPOSED ANNEXATION OF

City boundaries Richmond





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Acting Planning Director

March 31, 1953

To the Council of the
City of Richmond
Richmond, California

Gentlemen:

In accordance with your request for recommendations concerning the proposed annexation of the North Richmond area, the Planning Commission submits the attached report. Our staff has done considerable research and each Planning Commissioner has toured the area in person.

It is the opinion of the Planning Commission that the City should make every effort to annex the entire area north of the City, west of the City of San Pablo, and up to but excluding Parchester Village. The Planning Commission will aid the efforts of both the petitioners and the City in every way.

Respectfully submitted,

John J. Massey
JOHN J. MASSEY ^(P)
Chairman

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C O N T E N T S
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	Page
RECOMMENDATIONS	1
INTRODUCTION	2
Map of Annexation Areas	
Map of County Zoning	
AREA A	3
A. Description	
Map of Existing Land Use	
B. Governmental Services	
C. Economic Status	
D. Conclusions	
AREA B	7
AREA C	8
AREA D	9
IMPLICATIONS OF ANNEXATION TO THE CITY OF RICHMOND RELATIVE TO PLANNING AND ZONING	9
APPENDIX A	11
Letter of Request for Annexation	
APPENDIX B	12
Area of Proposed Annexation Parcels	

base

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RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THAT the City aid in every way those citizens residing in the North Richmond area who are requesting annexation;
2. THAT, in order to annex areas which will be financial assets as well as those which will be financial liabilities,
AND, in order to protect land adjacent to the City from substandard development,

THAT the City extend its boundaries northward to the north line of, but excluding, Parchester Village, including all the area between the San Pablo City Limits and the County line in the Bay.

A REPORT ON THE PROPOSED ANNEXATION
OF NORTH RICHMOND

INTRODUCTION

The area recommended for annexation to the City of Richmond consists of approximately 1215 acres of which 106 are devoted to residences, 10 to commercial development, 156 to industries, 8 to public uses, and 935 to vacant or agricultural land. In addition, 2870 acres are under water. For the purposes of identification, the total area has been divided into four areas:

Area A* -- This area is the primarily residential area directly north of the City Limits up to Wildcat Creek and from the Southern Pacific tracks westward to existing City Limits.

Area B* -- This area includes that area north of Wildcat Creek northerly to San Pablo Creek and from the Southern Pacific tracks westward to the Bay.

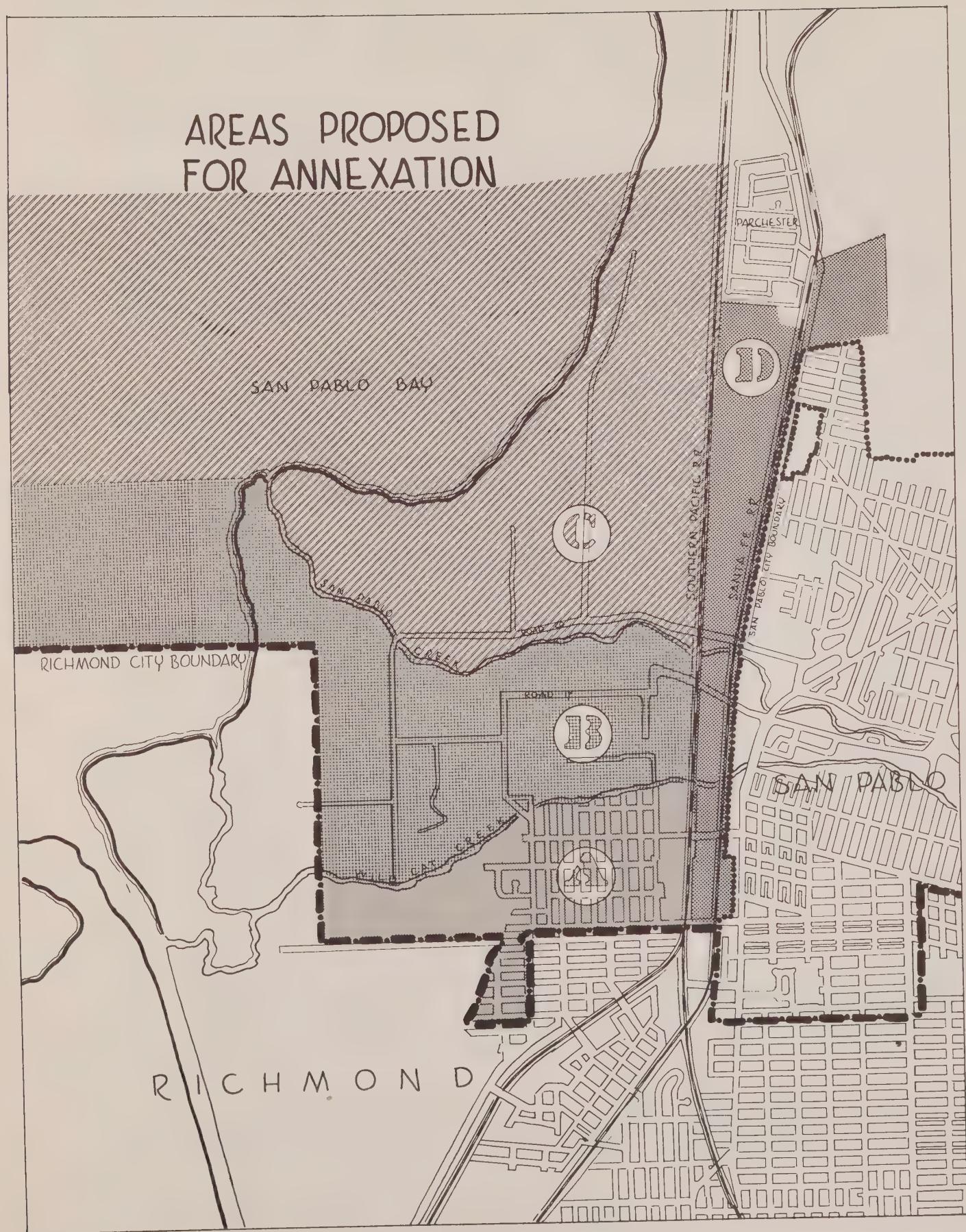
Area C* -- This area includes that area northward of San Pablo Creek to the north line of but excluding Parchester Village from the Southern Pacific tracks westerly to the Bay.

Area D* -- This area includes that strip of industrially developed and vacant land north of the City Limits between the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe Railroads including that certain portion of the Tank Farm property immediately east of the Santa Fe tracks.

These areas are outlined on the map on the following page.

* The legal limits of these areas would extend westward to the Contra Costa County - Marin County line situated roughly in the middle of the San Pablo Strait.

AREAS PROPOSED FOR ANNEXATION



AREA A

A. DESCRIPTION

1. General Level of Development -- This area is primarily residential in nature. However, approximately 66 acres of the total 199 acres are devoted to agricultural and other non-residential uses. There are approximately 862 residential dwelling units and 55 stores and other commercial uses. The Rheem drum plant is located in this area. There are 9 churches scattered throughout the area in various stages of structural development.

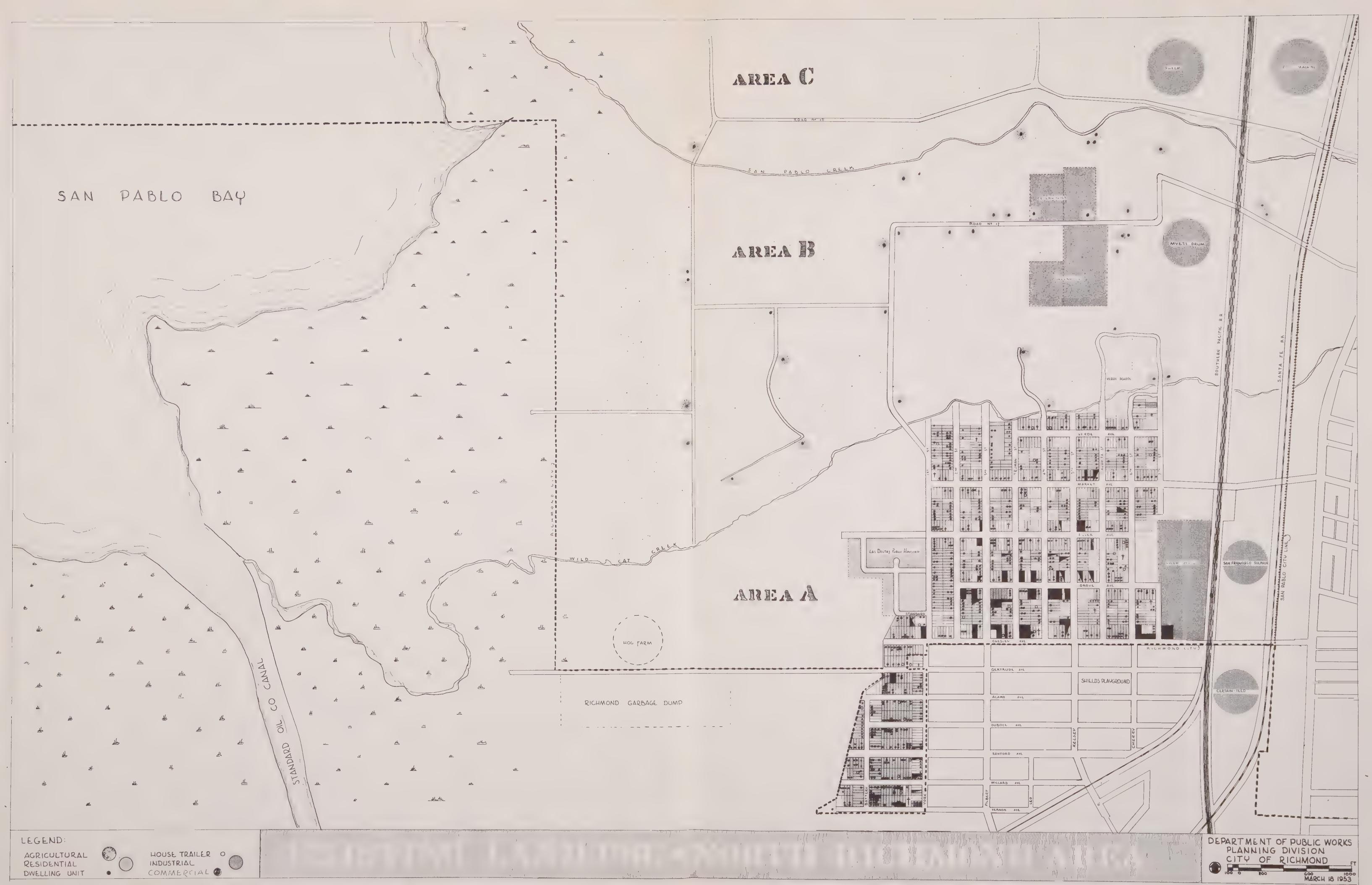
North Richmond, that is, the area south of Wildcat Creek, must be considered a blighted area. By definition, a "blighted area" is one which is dominated by the existence of buildings and structures which "by reason of defective design and character of physical construction, faulty interior arrangement and exterior spacing, high density of population and overcrowding, inadequate provision for ventilation, light, sanitation, open spaces and recreation facilities, age, obsolescence, deterioration, dilapidation, mixed character or shifting of uses . . . or any combination of such factors and characteristics" * which tend to encourage ill health, transmission of disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency and crime. Additional characteristics of a blighted area include a prevalence of depreciated values, impaired investments and a reduced capacity to pay taxes in relation to the cost of public services rendered.

This is not to say, however, that the area is beyond reclamation or rehabilitation. There are scattered throughout the area many good substantial homes. The incidence of home ownership is relatively high. Approximately 60 per cent of the homes are owner-occupied. Because of the difficulty of obtaining loans for residential construction, a majority of the dwelling units in the area have been designed and built by the owners themselves.

Only the center strip of each street is paved. There are no curbs, gutters or sidewalks. This presents a serious drainage problem and much of the area is impassable a good portion of the year. However, the citizens in the area have requested a street and sidewalk assessment district from the Board of Supervisors.

The Las Deltas low-rent public housing project is owned and operated by the Contra Costa County Housing Authority. It provides modern, decent housing for 76 families or approxi-

* California Redevelopment Act, 1945.



mately 350 persons, of which two-thirds are children under 18 years of age. This area has well paved streets, curbs, gutters and sidewalks. It is well landscaped and is a real credit to the community.

Area A is zoned for residential, business and industrial uses. See map on following page.

2. Traffic and Transportation -- Filbert Street within the City Limits becomes 3rd Street north of Chesley Avenue. This street is the major north-south arterial and connects the 7th Street underpass with the entire residential area. Market Avenue is the only east-west arterial and crosses both the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe tracks at grade. Because only the center strips of the streets are paved, it is often necessary to park vehicles in a way which allows only one lane for moving traffic. Most commercial establishments have no off-street parking of any kind. Abandoned automobiles or those in need of major repair can be seen on vacant properties throughout the area.

Public transportation is provided solely by Key System Route #69 which originates at Chesley Avenue and the Southern Pacific tracks. The route extends westward to Filbert and down Filbert to the 7th Street underpass and then to Macdonald Avenue. There is usually a 20-minute headway between busses throughout the day and a 30-minute headway during the evening hours.

3. Population -- According to the preliminary 1950 census there were 3114 persons living in Area A. There is no information immediately available with reference to specific age groups. It is estimated that the population of this area is approximately 3500 at the present time.

B. GOVERNMENTAL SERVICES OF AREA A

1. Schools -- Area A is served by the San Pablo Elementary School District and the Richmond Union High School District. Children in grades Kindergarten through 5th grade attend Verde School which is north of Wildcat Creek and has an enrollment of 317. Sixth graders attend the Market Street School in San Pablo. Junior High School children attend Walter T. Helms Junior High School located on County Road 20 approximately 1000 feet east of its intersection with San Pablo Avenue. The School Department does not furnish transportation for the junior high school students because public transportation is available to them. The same is true for high school students.

2. Health -- Health services are provided by the County from their offices located at 2016 Market Street, San Pablo. This includes home nursing services and inspection of premises licensed for food handling by County Sanitarians.

EXISTING COUNTY ZONING

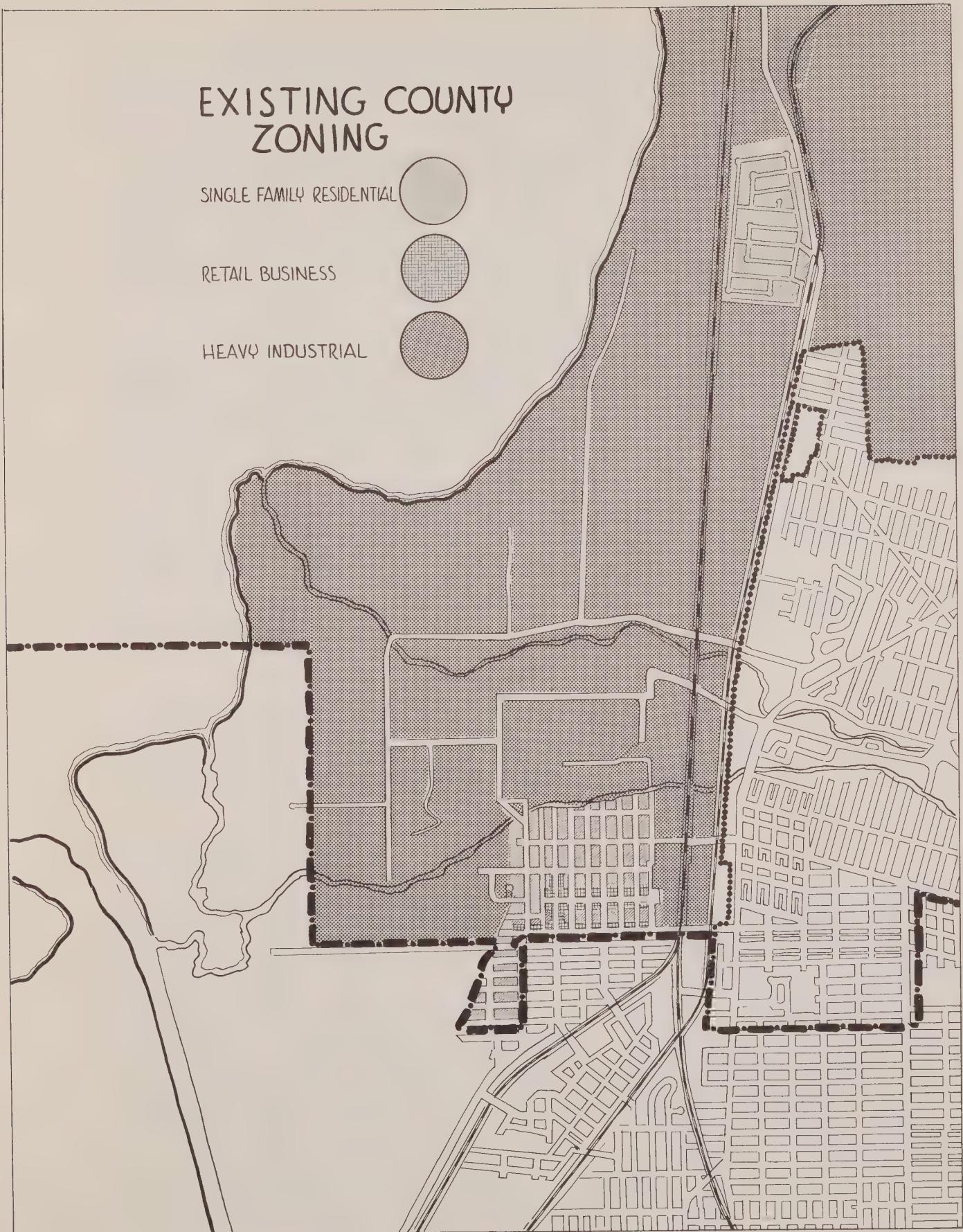
SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL



RETAIL BUSINESS



HEAVY INDUSTRIAL



3. Fire -- The area is in the San Pablo Fire District. The station is located at 2335 San Pablo Avenue in the City of San Pablo. Running time for apparatus from the station to this area is less than three minutes.

4. Sewage Disposal -- Area A is in the San Pablo Sanitary District. The Board of Directors of the District are presently considering a bond issue which would enable them to construct a sewage disposal plant and improved sewers. The need for sewage treatment in this area is by far one of the most serious problems facing its citizens. State and local health officials have continually condemned the situation.

5. Police -- This area receives a minimum amount of police protection from the Western District Office of the County Sheriff. The number of deputies available to the County Sheriff is not sufficient to allow municipal type police protection to this area. Recently, due to citizen alarm concerning vice and other crimes, the Sheriff has assigned two foot patrolmen to the area.

6. Library -- The area is presently served by a Contra Costa County library system bookmobile. It is in the area several days each week.

7. Other Services -- The area also receives various services from the special districts listed below:

San Pablo Light
C.C. Flood Control
West Contra Costa Hospital
West C.C. Hospital Bond
East Bay Municipal Utility
Contra Costa Junior College

C. ECONOMIC STATUS

1. Assessed Valuation -- The total assessed valuation of Area A is approximately \$1,009,566 of which \$128,340 is for the land and \$767,250 is for the improvements. The average assessed valuation for each dwelling unit and store is, of course, very low. The services needed by a residential area such as this one cost far more than the taxes which are paid in the area. It is important to point out that the North Richmond residential area will be a financial liability to the City for many years to come. However, this area would pay more of its share of taxes relative to services received if conditions were improved.

2. Tax Rate -- The property in Area A is currently assessed according to the following rates:

County Outside Richmond	2.459
San Pablo Fire	.768
San Pablo Light	.349
C.C. Flood Control	.010
San Pablo Sanitary	.400
West Contra Costa Hospital	.200
Southwest County Water	.025
West C.C. Hospital Bond	.013
East Bay Municipal Utility	.270
San Pablo Elem.	1.470
San Pablo Elem. Bond	.373
Richmond High	1.539
Richmond High Bond 2	.016
Richmond High Bond 3	.162
Contra Costa Junior College	<u>.356</u>
1952-1953 Total -	8.410 per \$100 of assessed valuation

3. Family Financial Status -- Based on earlier research it is known that a comparatively large percentage of the labor force does not have steady employment and is only able to find part-time work and odd jobs. The majority of the unemployed are unskilled workers. The fact that the proportion of welfare cases in this area as compared with the City of Richmond does not affect the situation relative to annexation inasmuch as this service is provided by the County.

4. Business Enterprises -- The business enterprises located within the neighborhood are mostly small retail and service establishments. They include grocery stores, bars and night clubs, beauty parlors and barbershops, cafes, and the like. All are small and many appear to be quite marginal in nature.

D. CONCLUSIONS --

1. The North Richmond area has many problems. Outstanding among those are the lack of recreation facilities. There are no public recreation facilities within this area with the exception of the small playlot provided by the American Friends Service Committee located at the Neighborhood House at Silver and Truman Streets. The City has provided the Shields Playground covering the entire block bordered by Gertrude and Alamo, Kelsey and Cherry Streets. It is used by children of all ages living both within and outside of the City Limits. It is obvious that the North Richmond area needs a combination park-playground area with a recreation building available to all groups. This community center could serve as a focal point for much of the social and recreation activity in North Richmond.

2. There is a need for general physical improvement in the area, particularly, with reference to streets, curbs and

gutters, sidewalks, street lights, tree planting and general home maintenance. It is impossible to estimate the cost of needed public improvements at this time.

3. As a result of blight and all its implications there exist in North Richmond many activities such as gambling, prostitution, narcotic sales and other crimes which have severe social effects on both children and the adults who live there. It behooves the City to take every measure to both improve the blighted conditions and to deter the illegal activities. The effects of crime and vice do not respect political boundaries. Children from both sides of the present City boundary attend the same schools and use the same playground.

4. Richmond can no longer afford to ignore a problem area which is economically and socially a part of the Richmond community. The municipal government and the citizens of Richmond have a responsibility toward this area. In order to improve the conditions in North Richmond, it is essential that it be brought within the City Limits which will enable our local government to extend municipal services and protection to this area. County government was never intended to serve an urbanized area. County services must be spread too thin to adequately serve North Richmond. It is obvious that the City must annex North Richmond in order to preserve what is good and improve what is bad.

A R E A B

DESCRIPTION

Area B extends northward from Wildcat Creek to San Pablo Creek and from Southern Pacific tracks westward to the existing City Limits and the Contra Costa County - Marin County boundary which is in San Pablo Strait. This area is predominantly agricultural but includes the Verde Elementary School which serves North Richmond. The area also includes the Meyer Drum Company which manufactures steel barrels and three groups of greenhouses which raise flowers and plants for distribution for commercial florists.

There are approximately 33 residences scattered throughout the area with an estimated population of 115. Area B consists of approximately 1445 acres of which 1000 acres are under water.

This area is presently zoned for Heavy Industry.

A R E A C

DESCRIPTION

Area C is that area north of San Pablo Creek west of the Southern Pacific tracks to the north line of but excluding Parchester Village westerly to the County boundary in San Pablo Strait. This area is predominantly agricultural and contains 23 residences with an estimated population of 80. The sole industry located in Area C is that of the Rheem Manufacturing Plant which operates under contract to the U. S. Army for ordnance purposes.

The Richmond Rod and Gun Club is also located at the northerly limits of Area C.

This area consists of an estimated 2209 acres of which only 339 acres are uplands. The area is presently zoned for Heavy Industry.

CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING AREAS B AND C

If Richmond is to grow and develop in a healthy way it is essential that the development which occurs be guided and regulated in accordance with a predetermined plan and at a high level of quality. In order to prevent the growth of areas similar to Area A, it is essential that the City annex as much area to the north as is feasible. By doing this it will be possible to plan and protect the area from unhealthy development. Modern zoning and subdivision regulations will protect existing investments and will encourage future investments.

The northernmost line of annexation Area C has been drawn at a natural, physical boundary. This boundary is located where the solid, buildable land drops off and becomes unbuildable marsh land. North of this marsh land is located the Atlas Powder Plant which is at present beyond the natural boundaries of the Richmond community. It is felt that in order to insure proper development all land suitable for residential and industrial use should be brought under control at the same time.

It is entirely feasible that the truck farms and flower growing industries to the north of the City will remain in agricultural use for many years to come. This area should be protected with agricultural or other highly restrictive zoning regulations in order to avoid scattered, disorganized, residential development.

A R E A D

Area D extends northward from the City Limits between the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe Railroad tracks to a line south of Parchester Village excluding certain properties but including a certain portion of the Tank Farm property immediately east of the Santa Fe tracks. This area consists of 232 acres and is approximately 50 per cent developed for industry and 50 per cent remains vacant. There are three residences located in the area and only two registered voters. Because the area is served by the two main line railroads, it is choice industrial land and should be reserved for such purposes. It is presently zoned for Heavy Industry.

CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING AREA D

This area should be included in the total area to be annexed by the City of Richmond for the same reasons as stated for Areas B and C. If industry is to participate in community affairs, it seems only reasonable that it pay its share of local taxes.

If this area is not annexed as uninhabited territory, it should be included in the proposal for annexation of the inhabited territory north of the City.

IMPLICATIONS OF ANNEXATION TO THE CITY OF RICHMOND RELATIVE TO PLANNING AND ZONING

It is important to point out that Richmond's Zoning Ordinance #1291 automatically rezones, for protective purposes, all land annexed into the city to an "R1" Single Family zone.

Section 13, subsection A, paragraph 4 reads as follows:

"Zoning of Annexed Areas -- Any area annexed to the city after the effective date of this ordinance shall, immediately upon such annexation, be automatically classified as an "R1" District until a zoning plan for said area has been adopted by the City Council. The Commission shall recommend to the City Council appropriate zoning for such area within three (3) months after an application for change is made to the Commission."

It can be assumed that the Planning Commission will initiate action to rezone land which is obviously not single family

in use or in nature. This zoning, however, should be done in accordance with a preliminary plan for the area. Land which is presently used for residence, commerce or industry would probably be rezoned in accordance with those uses and in accordance with good zoning practices. There will probably be many non-conforming uses created, the effective lives of which will be limited by certain restrictions in the City Ordinance. However, since the abolition of non-conforming uses does not go into effect until 1959, and effectively for many years later, there is little need for worry on the part of owners of improperly used property.

In areas which are presently undeveloped it will be necessary to prepare an over-all plan which will take into consideration the highest and best use of the land, keeping in mind the future development of the Richmond community.

It is important to note that the Richmond Zoning Ordinance is more modern than the present County Ordinance and may seem restrictive to those unaccustomed to modern governmental regulations. However, the high standards as required by our local Ordinance will insure future development of high quality in the area to be annexed.

In conclusion, the Planning Commission, on investigation of the entire North Richmond area, finds that it will be to the mutual long-range benefit of the North Richmond residents and the City of Richmond to join forces toward the improvement of our total environment.

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APPENDIX A

The North Richmond Citizen's Council
1707 Truman Street
Richmond, California

To the Honorable Gust Allyn, Mayor of Richmond,
and the Members of the City Council of Richmond:

On behalf of the North Richmond Citizen's Council, a group of local people determined to improve the condition of their community and thereby the condition of the entire Richmond area, we respectfully request that the City Council of Richmond, California, take such steps as will enable the community of North Richmond to become annexed to the City of Richmond.

It is our understanding that such procedure will not be binding but will lead to a vote by the people of North Richmond, at which time the people of the community will be able to state their final desire as to annexation.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the North Richmond
Citizen's Council,

/s/ John Amos
Mr. John Amos, General Council
Chairman

/s/ Rebecca Tatmon
Mrs. Rebecca Tatmon, General
Council Secretary

APPENDIX B

AREA OF PROPOSED ANNEXATION PARCELS

	A	B	C	D	Total
AREA IN ACRES	199	1445	2209	232	4085
Residential	105	--	--	1	106
Commercial	10	--	--	--	10
Industrial	13	25	3	115	156
Public	5	3	--	--	8
Vacant and/or Agricultural	66	417	336	116	935
Water	--	1000	1870	--	2870

APPENDIX C

ASSESSED VALUES PROPOSED NORTH RICHMOND ANNEXATION*

	<u>LAND</u>	<u>IMPROVEMENT</u>	<u>PERSONAL PROPERTY</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
SECTION A	\$ 113,590	\$ 730,400	\$ 105,856	\$ 949,846
SECTION B	106,590	137,400	---	243,990
SECTION C	129,933	505,350	982,686	1,617,969
SECTION D	<u>75,335</u>	<u>208,050</u>	<u>264,270</u>	<u>547,655</u>
TOTAL	\$ 425,448	\$1,581,200	\$1,352,812	\$3,359,460

* Excluding Utilities

Source: Forrest Simoni
Richmond City Assessor

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